St. Michael's N.S. Rackwallace

Child Safeguarding Statement & Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

Child Safeguarding Statement

St. Michael's National School is a primary school providing primary education to pupils from Junior Infants to Sixth Class.

In accordance with the Children First Act 2015, Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017 and its 2019 Addendum, Circular 0036/2023 and the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (revised 2023), the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 to 2016 and Circular 0031/2016, Circular 0055/2024 and the Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour, Circular 0044/2025 on personal mobile phones in primary schools, and Tusla guidance on preparing Child Safeguarding Statements, the Board of Management of St. Michael's National School has agreed the Child Safeguarding Statement and Written Risk Assessment set out in this document.

- The Board of Management has formally adopted and will implement fully and without modification the Department's Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (revised 2023), as required by Circular 0036/2023, pending formal adoption of any successor procedures within the applicable Department transition period.

- The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Brian Greenan

- The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Donna Mone

- The Board of Management recognises that child protection and welfare considerations permeate all aspects of school life and must be reflected in all of the school's policies, procedures, practices and activities. In its policies, procedures, practices and activities, the school will adhere to the following principles of best practice in child protection and welfare:

  The school will:

  - recognise that the protection and welfare of children is of paramount importance, regardless of all other considerations;
  - fully comply with its statutory obligations under the Children First Act 2015 and other relevant legislation relating to the protection and welfare of children;
  - fully co-operate with the relevant statutory authorities in relation to child protection and welfare matters;
  - adopt safe practices to minimise the possibility of harm or accidents happening to children and protect workers from the necessity to take unnecessary risks that may leave themselves open to accusations of abuse or neglect;

- develop a practice of openness with parents and encourage parental involvement in the education of their children; and
- fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealing with child protection matters.

The school will also adhere to the above principles in relation to any adult pupil with a special vulnerability.

The following procedures/measures are in place:

- Where a member of school personnel is the subject of an allegation, concern or investigation concerning a child, the school will follow the relevant chapter of the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (revised 2023), the applicable agreed disciplinary procedures, fair procedures, confidentiality requirements and any statutory reporting duties.

- In relation to the selection or recruitment of staff and their suitability to work with children, the school adheres to the statutory vetting requirements of the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 to 2016 and to the wider duty of care guidance set out in relevant Garda vetting and recruitment circulars published by the Department of Education & Skills and available on the DES website.

- In relation to the provision of information and, where necessary, instruction and training, to staff in respect of the identification of the occurrence of harm (as defined in the 2015 Act) the school-

  - Has provided each member of staff with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement
  - Ensures all new staff are provided with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement
  - Encourages staff to avail of relevant training
  - Encourages Board of Management members to avail of relevant training
  - The Board of Management maintains records of all staff and Board member training

- All school personnel must follow the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (revised 2023). Reports to Tusla will be made through the secure Tusla portal wherever possible; a copy of the submitted report will be printed and retained securely in accordance with the Procedures. Registered teachers will also comply with their statutory duties as mandated persons under the Children First Act 2015.

- In this school the Board has appointed the above named DLP as the "relevant person" (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) to be the first point of contact in respect of the schools child safeguarding statement.

- All registered teachers employed by the school are mandated persons under the Children First Act 2015.

- In accordance with the Children First Act 2015 and the Addendum to Children First (2019), the Board has carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while attending the school or participating in school activities. A written assessment setting out the areas of risk identified and the school's procedures for managing those risks is included with the Child Safeguarding Statement.

- The various procedures referred to in this Statement can be accessed via the school's website, the DE website or will be made available on request by the school.

This statement has been published on the school's website and has been provided to all members of school personnel, the Parent Teacher Association and the patron. It is readily accessible to parents and guardians on request. A copy of this Statement will be made available to Tusla and the Department if requested.

This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed annually or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which this statement refers.

This Child Safeguarding Statement was adopted by the Board of Management on 14th September 2020.

This Child Safeguarding Statement was reviewed by the Board of Management on 14th September 2026.

Signed: _____ Signed: _____

Chairperson of Board of Management Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: _____ Date: _____

Date of next review: _____ (no later than 12 months after the date of this review)

Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment
(of any potential harm)

Written Assessment of Risk of St. Michael's N.S.

In accordance with section 11 of the Children First Act 2015, Circular 0036/2023 and Chapter 8 of the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (revised 2023), the following is the Written Risk Assessment of St. Michael's N.S. Risk in this assessment means the potential for "harm" as defined in the Act and does not replace the school's separate health and safety risk assessment.

School activity / context	Indicative risk level	Risk of harm identified	Procedures and controls in place
Child protection governance, staff awareness and reporting	High	Harm may not be recognised, recorded, escalated or reported properly and promptly.	All personnel receive the Child Safeguarding Statement and the revised 2023 Procedures; induction and refresher training are recorded; DLP and Deputy DLP roles are communicated; registered teachers are reminded of mandated-person duties; reports are made through the Tusla portal wherever possible and retained securely; the principal presents the required Child Protection Oversight Report at each Board meeting.
Recruitment, contractors, volunteers, coaches, work-experience and student-teacher placements	Medium	Harm by an unsuitable, inadequately screened or unsupervised adult.	Safer recruitment, identity and reference checks, statutory declarations where applicable, and Garda vetting in accordance with the National Vetting Bureau Acts and Circular 0031/2016; role-specific induction and code of conduct; clear supervision arrangements; external personnel and placement students are not left alone with pupils unless formally authorised and safeguarded.
Classroom teaching, one-to-one support, counselling and coaching	Medium	Harm or inappropriate conduct by personnel or pupils; reduced visibility in one-to-one settings.	One-to-one work is planned, time-limited and conducted in an observable or interruptible setting where practicable; doors are not locked; appropriate visibility is maintained; the purpose and location are known to relevant staff; professional boundaries and record-keeping requirements apply.
Arrival, dismissal, recreation breaks, toilets and changing areas	High	Harm through inadequate supervision, peer behaviour, bullying or access by unauthorised adults.	Current supervision rota and defined zones; visible and vigilant supervision, including identified blind spots; controlled visitor access; agreed toilet and changing-area supervision that protects

			privacy; prompt recording and escalation of concerns; arrival and collection arrangements communicated to parents.
Bullying behaviour, including cyberbullying, racist, sexist, gender identity and disability-related bullying	High	Physical, social or emotional harm by pupils or others, online or offline.	The school implements its Bí Cineálta policy under Circular 0055/2024; adopts prevention and response strategies with pupils, parents and staff; maintains a student-friendly version; records and follows up bullying behaviour; reviews supervision hotspots; and the principal gives a bullying behaviour update at each Board meeting.
Use of ICT, online learning, social media, photography and personal devices	High	Cyberbullying, grooming, inappropriate communication, access to harmful content, image misuse or unauthorised persons accessing online activity.	Acceptable Use, data protection and image-consent procedures; filtered and supervised internet access; school-approved accounts and platforms; no private staff-pupil messaging; controlled links and participant access for any remote learning; incident reporting and preservation procedures; primary pupils cannot use or access personal mobile phones during the school day in accordance with Circular 0044/2025, subject to documented exceptional arrangements.
Pupils with special educational, communication, medical or intimate-care needs	High	Increased vulnerability, unmet communication needs, loss of dignity, inappropriate care or failure to recognise indicators of harm.	Individual, written and regularly reviewed care or support plans agreed with parents and relevant professionals; pupil voice and preferred communication methods; appropriately trained and authorised staff; privacy balanced with accountability; care records; staffing and contingency arrangements; no improvised intimate-care practice.
Distress, absconding or behaviour that presents an immediate risk	High	Harm to the pupil or others, unsafe exit from supervision, coercive or disproportionate physical intervention.	An individual behaviour and safety plan based on assessed need; proactive regulation and de-escalation supports; secure but fire-compliant access controls; agreed staff alert and response arrangements; immediate safeguarding and parental communication; incident recording and review. Any physical intervention is a last resort, necessary and proportionate to prevent immediate harm, undertaken only by appropriately trained staff and reviewed after the event. Pupil-specific operational detail is stored confidentially, not in the public Child Safeguarding Statement.

School outings, transport, swimming, sports, off-site and overnight activities	Medium	Harm by personnel, peers or members of the public; inadequate supervision in unfamiliar or private settings.	Activity-specific planning; Board approval where required; suitability checks on venues and providers; named group leaders and supervision arrangements; attendance, emergency and communication procedures; safe transport and handover; privacy arrangements for changing and accommodation; parental information and consent where appropriate.
Visitors, contractors and use of premises by other organisations	Medium	Unauthorised contact with pupils or harm by adults or children from another organisation.	Advance approval, sign-in and identification; restricted access while pupils are present; named school contact; supervision and safeguarding clauses in agreements; evidence of the organisation's safeguarding and vetting arrangements where relevant; clear responsibility for after-school services operated by a separate legal entity.
Administration of medication and first aid	Medium	Harm through inappropriate administration, poor storage, confidentiality breach or inadequate emergency response.	Written parental authorisation and individual care plans; trained and authorised personnel; secure storage and access; administration records; emergency medication kept accessible as appropriate; review after incidents and changes in need.
SPHE, RSE and Stay Safe provision	Medium	Pupils may lack age-appropriate knowledge, skills and trusted reporting routes if the programmes are not taught fully and consistently.	The school implements SPHE, RSE and Stay Safe in full; monitors coverage; provides staff support and suitable resources; communicates relevant arrangements to parents; and creates accessible opportunities for pupils to seek help.

Important Note: It should be noted that risk in the context of this risk assessment is the risk of "harm" as defined in the Children First Act 2015 and not general health and safety risk. The definition of harm is set out in Chapter 4 of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post- Primary Schools 2017*

In undertaking this risk assessment, the board of management has endeavoured to identify as far as possible the risks of harm that are relevant to this school and to ensure that adequate procedures are in place to manage all risks identified. While it is not possible to foresee and remove all risk of harm, the school has in place the procedures listed in this risk assessment to manage and reduce risk to the greatest possible extent.

Examples of activities, risks and procedures

The examples listed in this document are provided to assist schools in undertaking their risk assessment under the Children First Act, 2015. Schools should note that this list of examples is not intended to be exhaustive. It is the responsibility of each school to ensure, as far as possible, that any other risks and procedures that are relevant to its own particular circumstances are identified and specified in the written risk assessment and that adequate procedures are in place to address all risks identified.

It is acknowledged that schools already have in place a range of policies, practices and procedures to mitigate the risk of harm to children while they are participating in the activities of the school and that some school activities will carry low or minimal risks of harm compared to others. In the context of the risk assessment that must be undertaken by schools, the Children First Act, 2015 refers to risk as "any potential for harm". Therefore, it is important that, as part of its risk assessment process, each school lists and reviews all of its various activities (which shall include identifying those that may carry low risk of harm as well as those that carry higher risks of harm). Doing so will help the school to (1) identify, as required under the Children First Act, 2015, any risks of harm that may exist in respect of the school's activities, (2) identify and assess the adequacy of the various procedures already in place to manage those risks of harm and (3) identify and put in place any such additional procedures as are considered necessary to manage any risk identified.

The Addendum to *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children* published in January 2019 clarifies that organisations providing relevant services to children should consider the specific issue of online safety when carrying out their risk assessment and preparing their Child Safeguarding Statement.

The Guidance on Continuity of Schooling for primary and post-primary schools (April 2020) advises of the importance of teachers maintaining the safe and ethical use of the internet during distance learning and assisting parents and guardians to be aware of their role also. Schools should ensure that their Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) informs and guides remote or distance learning activity.

Important Note: It should be noted that risk in the context of this risk assessment is the risk of "harm" as defined in the Children First Act, 2015 and not general health and safety risk. The definition of harm is set out in chapter 4 of the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017.

Examples of School Activities

- Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils
- Recreation breaks for pupils
- Classroom teaching
- One-to-one teaching

- One-to-one learning support
- One-to-one counselling
- Outdoor teaching activities
- Online teaching and learning remotely
- Sporting Activities
- School outings
- School trips involving overnight stay
- School trips involving foreign travel
- Use of toilet/changing/shower areas in schools
- Provision of residential facilities for boarders
- Annual Sports Day
- Fundraising events involving pupils
- Use of off-site facilities for school activities
- School transport arrangements including use of bus escorts
- Care of children with special educational needs, including intimate care where needed,
- Care of any vulnerable adult students, including intimate care where needed
- Management of challenging behaviour amongst pupils, including appropriate use of restraint where required
- Management of provision of food and drink
- Administration of Medicine
- Administration of First Aid
- Curricular provision in respect of SPHE, RSE, Stay Safe
- Prevention and dealing with bullying amongst pupils
- Training of school personnel in child protection matters
- Use of external personnel to supplement curriculum
- Use of external personnel to support sports and other extra-curricular activities
- Care of pupils with specific vulnerabilities/ needs such as
  - Pupils from ethnic minorities/migrants
  - Members of the Traveller community
  - Lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) children
  - Pupils perceived to be LGBT
  - Pupils of minority religious faiths
  - Children in care
  - Children on CPNS
  - Children with medical needs
- Recruitment of school personnel including -
  - Teachers/SNA's
  - Caretaker/Secretary/Cleaners
  - Sports coaches
  - External Tutors/Guest Speakers
  - Volunteers/Parents in school activities
  - Visitors/contractors present in school during school hours
  - Visitors/contractors present during after school activities

- Participation by pupils in religious ceremonies/religious instruction external to the school
- Use of Information and Communication Technology by pupils in school, including social media
- Application of sanctions under the school's Code of Behaviour including detention of pupils, confiscation of phones etc.
- Students participating in work experience in the school
- Students from the school participating in work experience elsewhere
- Student teachers undertaking training placement in school
- Use of video/photography/other media to record school events
- After school use of school premises by other organisations
- Use of school premises by other organisation during school day
- Breakfast club
- Homework club/evening study

Examples of Risks of Harm

- Risk of harm not being recognised by school personnel
- Risk of harm not being reported properly and promptly by school personnel
- Risk of child being harmed in the school by a member of school personnel
- Risk of child being harmed in the school by another child
- Risk of child being harmed in the school by volunteer or visitor to the school
- Risk of child being harmed by a member of school personnel, a member of staff of another organisation or other person while child participating in out of school activities e.g. school trip, swimming lessons
- Risk of harm due to inappropriate use of online remote teaching and learning communication platform such as an uninvited person accessing the lesson link, students being left unsupervised for long periods of time in breakout rooms
- Risk of harm due to bullying of child
- Risk of harm due to racism
- Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of children in school
- Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of children while attending out of school activities
- Risk of harm due to inappropriate relationship/communications between child and another child or adult
- Risk of harm due to children inappropriately accessing/using computers, social media, phones and other devices while at school
- Risk of harm to children with SEN who have particular vulnerabilities, including medical vulnerabilities
- Risk of harm to child while a child is receiving intimate care
- Risk of harm due to inadequate code of behaviour
- Risk of harm in one-to-one teaching, counselling, coaching situation
- Risk of harm caused by member of school personnel communicating with pupils in an inappropriate manner via social media, texting, digital device or other manner
- Risk of harm caused by member of school personnel accessing/circulating inappropriate material via social media, texting, digital device or other manner

Examples of Procedures to address risks of harm

- All school personnel are provided with a copy of the school's *Child Safeguarding Statement*
- The *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017* are made available to all school personnel
- School Personnel are required to adhere to the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017* and all registered teaching staff are required to adhere to the *Children First Act 2015* and it's Addendum (2019)
- The school implements in full the Stay Safe Programme
- The school implements in full the SPHE curriculum
- The school implements in full the Wellbeing Programme at Junior Cycle
- The school has an Anti-Bullying Policy which fully adheres to the requirements of the Department's *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*
- The school undertakes anti-racism awareness initiatives
- The school has a yard/playground supervision policy to ensure appropriate supervision of children during, assembly, dismissal and breaks and in respect of specific areas such as toilets, changing rooms etc.
- The school has in place a policy and clear procedures in respect of school outings
- The school has a Health and safety policy
- The school adheres to the requirements of the Garda vetting legislation and relevant DE circulars in relation to recruitment and Garda vetting
- The school has a codes of conduct for school personnel (teaching and non-teaching staff)
- The school complies with the agreed disciplinary procedures for teaching staff
- The school has a Special Educational Needs policy
- The school has an intimate care policy/plan in respect of students who require such care
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for the administration of medication to pupils
- The school –
    - Has provided each member of school staff with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement
    - Ensures all new staff are provided with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement
    - Encourages staff to avail of relevant training
    - Encourages board of management members to avail of relevant training
    - Maintains records of all staff and board member training
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for the administration of First Aid
- The school has in place a code of behaviour for pupils
- The school has an Acceptable Use Policy in place, to include provision for online teaching and learning remotely, and has communicated this policy to parents

- The school has in place a policy governing the use of smart phones and tablet devices in the school by pupils as per circular 38/2018
- The school has in place a Critical Incident Management Plan
- The school has in place a Home School Liaison policy and related procedures
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for the use of external persons to supplement delivery of the curriculum
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for the use of external sports coaches
- The school has in place a policy and clear procedures for one-to-one teaching activities
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for one-to-one counselling
- The school has in place a policy and procedures in respect of student teacher placements
- The school has in place a policy and procedures in respect of students undertaking work experience in the school
- The school has in place a policy and procedures in respect of pupils of the school undertaking work experience in external organisations

This Written Risk Assessment was reviewed and updated by the Board of Management on _____. It will be reviewed annually as part of the review of the Child Safeguarding Statement and as soon as practicable after any material change, safeguarding incident, change in school activity, or relevant legislative, Departmental or Tusla guidance update.

Signed: _____ Signed: _____

Chairperson of Board of Management Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: _____ Date: _____